

**TESTIMONY OF ALEXA KIERNAN SUBMITTED TO THE APPROPRIATIONS AND HIGHER
EDUCATION COMMITTEE ON FEBRUARY 24, 2015**

***H.B. No. 6824 An Act Concerning the State Budget For the Biennium Ending
June Thirtieth 2017, and Making Appropriations Thereafter and Other Provisions
Related to Revenue***

Alexa Kiernan appreciates the opportunity to submit testimony concerning **H.B. No. 6824-An Act Concerning the State Budget for the Biennium Ending June Thirtieth 2017, and Making Appropriations Thereafter and Other Provisions Related to Revenue.** It is imperative that the funding for the CT AHEC Network be restored (\$456K). Eastern AHEC, Inc. has provided me with the training necessary to provide culturally competent care.

I currently attend UCONN where I have participated as a Collegiate Health Service Corps member for 2 semesters with Eastern AHEC, Inc. As a CHSC participant I have been able to gain hands on experience by providing health education to medically underserved populations. I have never been part of a program that has continually helped me grow both professionally and academically.

AHEC is based at the University of Connecticut Health Center and is implemented through four regional centers located in the Willimantic, Hartford, Waterbury, and Bridgeport areas. The four centers enable the AHEC Program to carry out local programs with great efficiency. As a statewide program, it functions locally to provide high quality, efficient, effective and flexible services that meet local needs.

Fiscal support for AHEC is as diverse as its programs with state, federal, foundation and private support. Withdrawal of state support will jeopardize these other resources. In an era of healthcare transformation, maintaining the \$456,000 AHEC line item in the 2016-2017 state budget is critical to assure that the CT AHEC Network will be there to deliver its unique services and programs to our residents as it creates the diverse, well trained and cost effective interprofessional healthcare workforce that Connecticut requires and deserves.